



CONGRESSMAN BOB FILNER talks with Holtville Middle School Principal Tish Lyon during a visit he made to the campus last Thursday afternoon.

Congressman Visits Holtville Middle School

Congressman Bob Filner paid a visit to Holtville Middle School last Thursday afternoon, where he got a firsthand look at some of the problems facing a typical school in a small district in a small town. But he also was able to see many of the good things students get from attending a small school with a dedicated teaching staff.

While school administrators viewed the visit as an opportunity for students to learn a little more about government, Filner no doubt learned something about today's middle school students. The former teacher, who said that his immediate family still includes a number of teachers, faced some pointed questions posed to him by sixth, seventh and eighth graders.

"Why are you a democrat?" asked one, which the representative tried to answer with an out-

line of what government does and how he sees each party taking on those tasks.

But some of the questions were tougher to answer.

"If you care about education so much, how come so many teachers were cut?" asked another, referring to planned layoffs announced recently by school board trustees.

Filner talked about priorities, budgeting and the importance of majority rule in summing up how the political process works.

While listening to a computerized language arts class discuss the best ways to word an outline the life of a poet, Filner was able to have a short talk with a couple of local student government candidates.

When student body vice presidential candidate Martin Garcia

asked what a congressman does, Filner compared his job to the one that Martin hopes to get. He asked the seventh grader what he wants to do if he is elected.

"I'm going to make the school better," Martin replied. Filner tried to relate what he does in Washington D.C. in hopes of making the country better to what Martin hopes to do in local school government.

Superintendent Pat Maruca and HUSD Chief Business Officer Jackie Ruiz accompanied Principal Gerardo Roman and Assistant Principal Tish Lyon on Filner's tour of the campus. They were able to brief the congressman on what was taking place during every classroom visit and tried to relate some of the problems the school and district are facing.